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Part IV

Recreation Element

San Diego County General Plan - 1990

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County planning San Diego
Recreation County " " "

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Intent of the Recreation Element

The Recreation Element consists of this statement of intent and goals, the Local Park Plan, the Regional Park Plan, and a map entitled "Recreation Element — San Diego County General Plan" on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors as document No. 471292.

It is the intent of the Recreation Element that each adopted Community Plan, adopted Sub-regional Plan, and adopted Development Plan shall provide detailed planning for the provision of recreational facilities in each subarea of the unincorporated portion of San Diego County within the framework of the overall goals, policies, and standards set forth in the Recreation Element.

It is not the intent of the Recreation Element to show the exact location of any park or open space.

For informational purposes, the Recreation Element map indicates the general location of all existing parks and the parks that have been indicated on all adopted city and community plans. This Recreation Element shall in no way supercede the adopted community or general plans of any city or the adopted recreation element of any community plan in the unincorporated area of San Diego County or the adopted park plans of any state or federal agency.

It is intended that the forthcoming Comprehensive Planning Organization Outdoor Recreation

Study and Plan shall provide additional data to supplement this Recreation Element. Specifically, standards, objectives and plans for the ocean, beaches, and specific proposals for recreational services and programs are intended to be added to this Recreational Element after the completion of these studies.

There are some areas of the County of San Diego, not yet precisely identified which are essential to the preservation of wildlife and the natural environment of the region. It is intended that as these areas are identified, they shall be included in the forthcoming Open Space Element of the County General Plan.

Goals

The general goals of the Recreation Element and of the facilities which it proposes are:

To enhance the physical, mental and spiritual well being of County residents by providing opportunities for relaxation, rest, activity, education, and relationships with their neighbors.

To provide a system of public parks and outdoor recreation facilities which not only preserve significant areas of natural beauty for citizen enjoyment, but which also serve the needs of the citizens in their immediate environments. This system is to be augmented by private outdoor recreation facilities that are compatible with the goals and objectives of the public system.

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Chapter 1

The Local Park Plan

Goals and Objectives

Since playgrounds and neighborhood parks were first popularized in the United States during the 1870's and 1880's, the concept of recreation development has been synonymous with park development. This has meant that park agencies employed more general workmen and maintenance employees than special educators and spent the majority of the available financial resources on maintenance of physical facilities. Today, when planning for parks it is easy to visualize acres of land, picnic tables, swimming pools, and neighborhood centers.

In the future, however, the park planner must look beyond the physical facility to the needs of the ultimate clientele, who are people. For the acres of land are not ends in themselves but are merely instruments to be used in developing individual human capabilities. This definition of "human development" must not be restricted to programs for enhancement of physical fitness or merely keeping the children off the streets. It should encompass a program that introduces citizens of all ages to the cultural life of the community. It should serve as a complementary resource to formal education. It must provide a means for the individual to properly develop, participate, interrelate to his urban environment and to its local neighborhood.

A commitment to this philosophy requires that major modifications be made in both the thrust and content of our present park and recreation programs. Certainly these programs must be retained and even expanded but they must be viewed only as an important part of an overall regional program for human development.

A general goal of the Recreation Element and of the facilities which it proposes is:

To enhance the physical, mental, and spiritual well being of county residents by providing opportunities for relaxation, rest, activity, education, and relationships with their neighbors.

Obviously this overall objective is broad enough to encompass the purpose of sundry other public and private organizations. Indeed, the benefits, for example, of close cooperation between schools and recreation departments, and joint school-park use of recreation facilities has long been recognized, albeit too often ignored due to the independent status of schools. People-oriented programs other than schools, as well as the park program itself would benefit from stronger relationships and coordination. Some examples are:

1. Cultural programs (art, music, crafts, etc.) could be provided in cooperation with museums, community orchestras and bands, theater and entertainment organizations as well as schools of all grades and colleges.
2. Leisure learning activities are related to the services provided by both libraries and schools as well as senior citizen organizations and others.
3. Day care centers which reduce welfare costs by assisting parents in obtaining and holding a job can be located in local park settings.
4. Head Start programs, which assist in insuring a child's readiness for more formal learning situations in school, can be housed in community centers.

5. Neighborhood beautification and revitalization. The development of a park and neighborhood center can be used to boost the morale of neighborhood residents and act as a catalyst to inspire others to upgrade their properties and their communities, thus halting deterioration of a neighborhood. A program of this type could be coordinated with other programs such as CHIRP — Community Housing Improvement and Revitalization Program.
6. Senior Citizens' Centers can be provided in cooperation with senior citizens organizations.
7. Community groups such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, teen clubs, mothers clubs, neighborhood associations, also go far towards involving people in the life of the community in giving them a sense of belonging to and responsibility for their community.

Purchasing park acreages and planting grass is of value only as it provides passive open space. While this is valuable, additional investment in recreational programs is needed to translate the open space acreages into programs which affect the lives of those in the community.

By recasting the County's basic goal of recreation services in terms of human development instead of physical facilities, the County's recreational planning can be focused into areas of need with more accuracy and at the same time the County can avail itself of significantly greater and more diverse financial and man power resources to complete these projects. In other words, the County can avail itself of federal and state funds which are designated for human development programs to complete and maintain its recreation services. San Diego County's uniqueness as an experimental laboratory for government programs has been recognized in many ways. It is the only single County Planning Region in the state. The Ford Foundation has recognized San Diego's uniqueness in giving the IREM grant. We believe that by careful planning, San Diego County can be used as a test area for obtaining federal and state monies to be used as seed money for a program to integrate people programs with physical facilities provided at park and recreation centers.

Specific objectives of the Local Park Section of the Recreation Element are:

1. To establish a system of local recreational facilities.
2. To provide policies and standards which will enable the County to provide, over the next twenty years, the local parks needed by 1990.
3. To integrate planning for local parks with the community planning program in each community to the maximum degree possible.
4. To provide local park facilities which are appropriate for the individual neighborhoods and communities in which they are located.
5. To insure that local parks are available when and where needed by acquiring them through the subdivision process.
6. To complement the Regional Park Plan and to free regional parks to serve the people of the entire region by providing facilities for intensive local usage.
7. To complement, and to serve as the precursor to the forthcoming Outdoor Recreation Study and Plan to be undertaken by the Comprehensive Planning Organization.

Policies and Principles

In addition to the goals and objectives of this Plan, the following principles and policies should be followed in the planning, operation, and financing of park and recreation services:

1. A park system should provide recreation opportunities for all, regardless of national origin, color, age, or economic status, or location of residence.
2. Plans for park and recreation facilities should be based on both present and future needs, and should be reviewed and revised as a part of a continuing planning process.
3. Recreational facilities and services provided by private agencies and commercial enterprises should be evaluated and taken into account, to avoid duplication when planning

for public recreational facilities. However, proper recreational facilities must still be provided for those for whom the non-public facilities are inappropriate or unavailable.

4. All parks and recreation facilities should be planned as parts of an overall, well-balanced park system.
5. Park planning should be integrated with general planning programs, both on a County-wide and community basis.
6. Each park facility should be of sufficient size and proper location to foster flexibility in activities and programs.
7. Land for recreational uses should be acquired or reserved well in advance of need as much as possible, to insure that it will be available.
8. Space standards for parks should be met and the land acquired even if limited financial resources preclude immediate development.
9. Park lands should be dedicated for park purposes and be protected against diversion to non-recreational uses.
10. Regional parks should be designed to serve the people of the entire region. Local parks should be so located and developed that they relieve the pressure to utilize regional facilities for intensive, local recreational activities.

Standards

The best measure of the quality of park and recreational services is in the ultimate enrichment of the lives of the people served. This is not readily measurable so other types of indices are necessary.

The amount and location of the physical space available is one of the most important factors in determining the ability of an individual park or an entire park system to accommodate recreational demands and to adopt to changing needs. Measures of physical and locational characteristics include: acreage, acreage per thousand population, effective service radius in both time and distance, and population within the effective service radius.

Other common indicators of recreational service levels include: expenditures for parks and recreation (total and per capita), recreation spending as related to total expenditure and the revenue base, number of park and recreational personnel (total and per capita), relative use of funds and personnel for property-oriented functions (e.g., property maintenance) and people-related services (e.g., recreation leaders).

An important contribution which the CPO Outdoor Recreation Study and Plan could make would be the formulation of standards relating more directly to the overall quality of recreation services.

PRESENT RECREATION STANDARDS AND SERVICE LEVELS

Tables 1, 2, and 3 illustrate the wide variations in level of recreation services provided by agencies in the County of San Diego.

In addition to the variations in park acreages and standards, the per capita recreation budgets (1969-70) of the cities ranged from \$3.63 to \$30.36. Within the unincorporated area, wide variations also exist. The San Dieguito area (population 27,500) is served by ten County parks with a total of 149.68 acres (not including beaches), or 5.4 acres per 1,000 population. Poway, with a population exceeding 14,000 has no parks and obviously no beaches. This is indicative of the basic inequity in the present local park program in the County.

While the County has assumed primary responsibility for regional parks, two cities, Escondido and San Diego, also plan to provide regional as well as municipal facilities. In contrast, the proposed Chula Vista Recreation Plan refers to regional parks provided by the County and the City of San Diego, and to state parks as meeting part of the recreational needs of its residents, thus eliminating the need for Chula Vista to provide the full acreage to meet its own local park standard.

Since there is no consensus among the cities as to a desirable local park standard or level of recreation service, the County is in a position to adopt an independent standard of park service which the County is willing to support.

Table 1
1970 LOCAL PARK ACREAGE*
San Diego Region

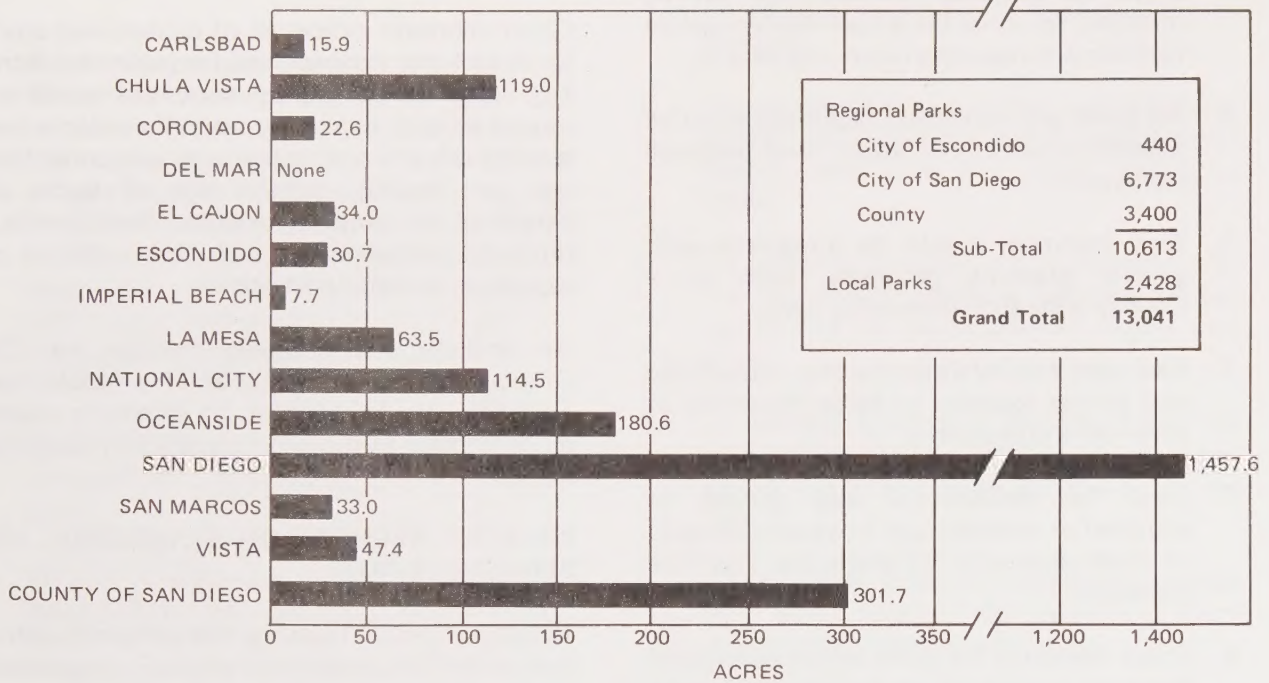
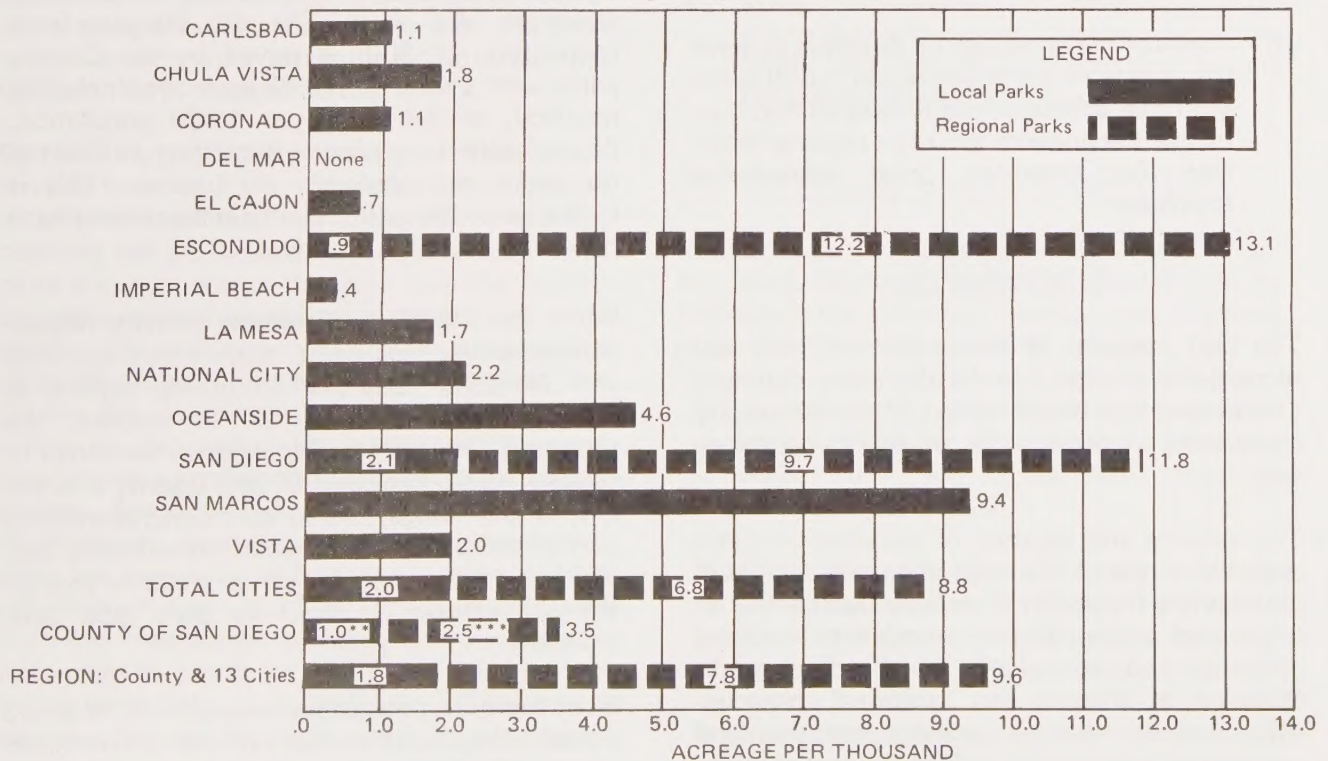


Table 2
1970 PARK ACREAGE* (Per 1000 Population)
San Diego Region



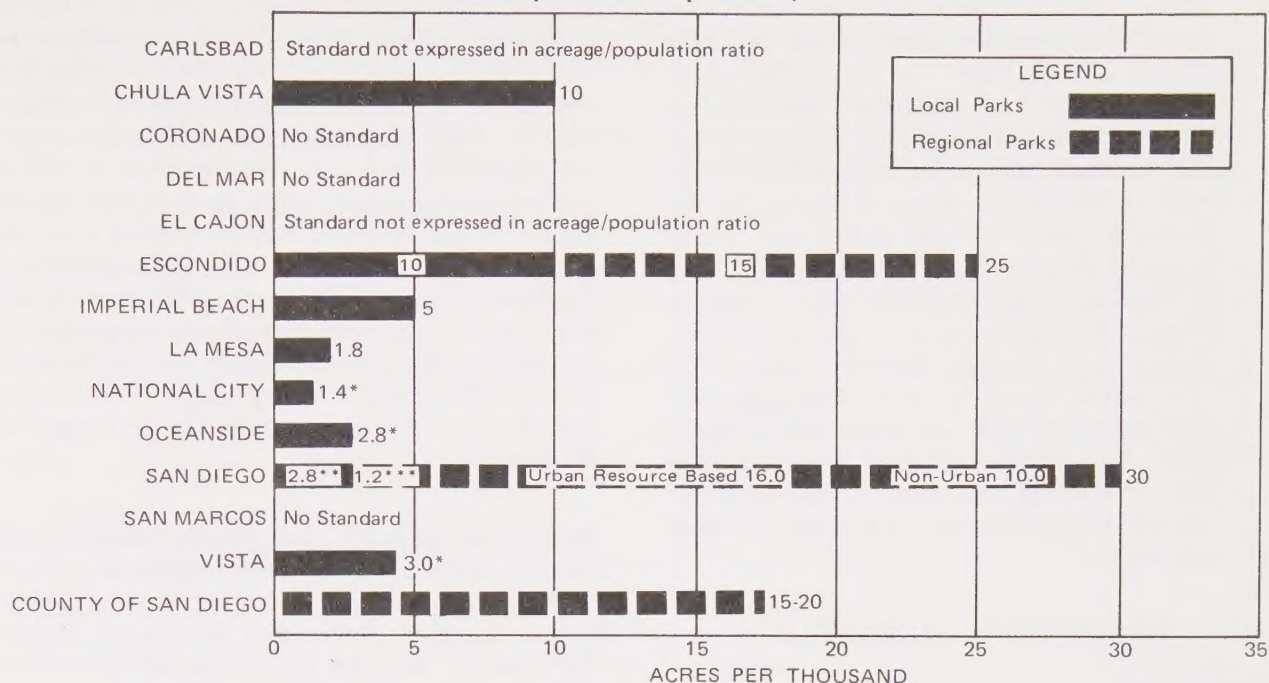
* Does not include golf courses or beaches except where part of regional facility.

** Unincorporated Area

*** Total County

Table 3
PARK STANDARDS
(Acres per 1000 Population)

(1971)



* Approximate: Derived from General Plan population and park acreage data.

** Neighborhood and community.

*** Miscellaneous

FACTORS INFLUENCING STANDARDS FORMULATION

The task of formulating standards for local parks may appear at first to be a simple mathematical exercise in finding a comfortable median between the desires for recreational facilities and the realities of available financing. However, this simple mathematical approach cannot be used in a region as complex as San Diego County.

In developing a standard, two important questions must be answered. What level of service will be needed to meet the recreational needs of the County's residents in 1990? And, how can equity of service be insured for sparsely populated rural areas as well as suburban and urban communities? The difficulty of these questions may be adjudged by the fact that while many public agencies have formulated service policies and standards for state, County-wide, regional, and urban parks, none (at least to our knowledge) has devised a comprehensive park policy and standards for local, population-based parks, which can be

applied to the full spectrum of rural, suburban, and urban densities found in the County of San Diego.

Let us take up the second question first. Only two agencies have been found which have devised standards for rural communities: the Department of the Interior (1934) and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (1969).

While neither proposal was designed for situations directly comparable to that in San Diego County, their underlying principles are more universal. Both emphasize that rural dwellers, as much as their urban counterparts, need recreational facilities. These studies also emphasized that small rural communities need more park acreage per thousand population than do more densely populated areas. The 1934 Interior Department report explains it this way:

"The basic reason for this apparent lack of balance is that irrespective of the number of people to be served there is a minimum

desirable number of types of recreation areas with a total gross acreage necessary in any corporate community if the outdoor recreational needs of the inhabitants are to be served. For example, a community of 1,500 people should have one combined playground and school site of not less than one block, or about 3 acres; one play field of not less than 5 or more acres; one small park of at least a block or about 3 acres, in the shopping center of the town; one picnic grove of 10 or more acres; one small natural swimming center if topographical conditions present the opportunity; a site for a public library and perhaps another (site) for a community house. In short, the total desirable recreation area would be from 25 to 30 acres. This same amount of space in a large city, if divided into special types of areas, would serve satisfactorily a far larger number of people."¹

SMALL TOWN STANDARDS

National Park Service and National Resources Board
U.S. Department of the Interior (1934)

Population	Acres/1,000 Population
5,000 — 8,000	13.3
2,500 — 5,000	16.7
1,000 — 2,500	20.0
Less than 1,000	25.0

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (1969)

Population	Acres/1,000 Population
Metro. Areas (over 100,000)	10 (by 1970)
Metro. Areas	15 (by 1980)
5,000 — 100,000	15
1,000 — 5,000	20
Less than 1,000	25

LOCAL VARIATIONS

A comprehensive standard must not only provide the framework for measuring the needs in differing rural and urban areas, but also must allow for variations among urban neighborhoods. Just as no two individuals are identical, neighbor-

hoods and communities are also unique, even though they may be adjacent to each other. Variations among the parts of a city or County may be greater than differences among the regions of the state. Neighborhoods and communities are also unique, even though they may be adjacent to each other. Variations among the parts of a city or County may be greater than differences among the regions of the state. Neighborhoods may be predominately young, aging, aged, or they may be mixed in age. Housing may be large or small lot, single family, garden or high rise apartments, duplexes, row houses, modern or old. Family sizes may reflect a high proportion of young marrieds and senior citizens or families in the middle of the child bearing and rearing years. The median income may be very low, very high or some place in between.

Recreation needs are most closely related to age, income, social or ethnic habits, residence type and density, climate, and topography. The United States Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission and the California Department of Parks and Recreation appear to have done the greatest amount of basic research relating personal characteristics and recreational propensities. However, this research is more applicable to state and regional facilities than to local, population based parks.²

USE OF RESIDENTIAL DENSITIES

While other population characteristics relating to local recreation preferences are not readily quantifiable, it is known that residential density is one of the most important factors in planning park locations since it determines the effective service distance, or spacing of parks, and the population of service areas. It is also the factor which is most susceptible to prediction and control. The California Committee on Planning for Recreation, Park Area and Facilities expresses these relationships as shown in Table 4.

The California Committee stated that three-eighths mile is the maximum effective service distance.³ Some authorities believe that neighborhood parks cannot effectively serve more than 5,000 people regardless of the service distance. A minimum population of 2,000 within a three-eighths mile radius indicates an average density of

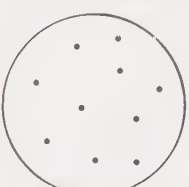
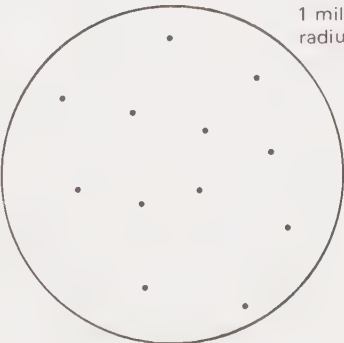
¹ National Resources Board, *Recreational Use of Land in the U.S.* Government Printing Office 1938 (Written 1934).

² It is recommended that the CPO Outdoor Recreation Study and Plan include the original research needed to be able to quantify recreational needs and relate them to population characteristics on a neighborhood and community scale.

³ Other authorities suggest a quarter mile limit as being the maximum walking distance for a child.

Table 4
**RELATION BETWEEN RESIDENTIAL DENSITY AND THE EFFECTIVE SERVICE DISTANCE
 OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD RECREATION CENTER**

(Adopted from Report of California Committee on Planning for Recreation, Park Areas and Facilities)

	Average Family Size	Lot Size	Predominant Building Type	Effective Service Distance	Total Net Acres Excluding Streets and Public Uses	Population Within Effective Service Distance
High Density • = 200 people  1/8 mile radius 36+ persons/gross acre 50-100 persons per net acre	2.6	Varies	Multi-Story Apartments	1/8 mile	23 net acre 31 gross ac.	2,000 to 4,000
Medium Density • = 200 people  1/4 mile radius 22-36 persons/gross acre 30-50 persons per net acre	3.0	Varies	Duplex, Row Houses, Two and Three Story Apartments	1/4 mile	91 net ac. 126 gr. ac.	2,500 to 4,500
Low Density 1 • = 200 people  1/4 mile radius 14-22 persons/gross acre 23-30 persons per net acre	3.3	5,000 to 7,000 sq. ft.	Single Family Detached House	1/4 mile	91 net ac. 126 gr. ac.	2,000 to 3,000
Low Density 2 • = 200 people  3/8 mile radius 9-14 persons/gross acre 15-20 persons per net acre	3.5	7,000 to 10,000 sq. ft.	Single Family Detached House	1/4 to 3/8 mile	206 net ac. 283 gr. ac.	2,500 to 4,000
Very Low Density  1/2 mile radius 4-8 persons/gross acre	3.5	10,000 sq. ft. to 1/2 ac.	Single Family Detached House	1/2 mile	503 gross acres	2,000 to 4,000
Rural Residential  1 mile radius 1-4 persons/gross acre	3.5	1/2 acre and larger	Single Family Detached House	1 mile	2,011 gross acres	2,000 to 4,000

7 to 9 persons per gross acre. While the average distance to the closest park should be as short as possible, it is not feasible to serve areas with a density less than 9 persons per acre without spacing the parks farther apart.

The lowest density which should be provided a neighborhood park would be those areas with a minimum of 2,000 people within a one mile radius. These areas will have a density of from 1 to 4 persons per gross acre with lot sizes of one half acre or more.⁴ While much of the need for open space and passive recreation is met by the individual parcel, there remains a need for a place to accommodate family and group picnics, meetings, organized sports, etc.

Areas with less than 2,000 persons within a one mile radius are too sparsely populated to warrant providing a neighborhood facility. The park needs can be met through the use of schools and community parks.

Community parks are somewhat less influenced by neighborhood densities. In sparsely populated areas, particularly in those without neighborhood facilities, a community facility should be planned for areas with a population of 5,000 within a three mile radius or 10 minute driving time. Generally, however, a community park will serve 10,000 to 25,000 people within a radius of 1 to 2 miles. Occasionally it may be preferable for a community facility to serve up to 50,000 people.

RECOMMENDED STANDARD

While there is no definitive standard for measuring recreation services, the ability of a park system to accommodate increasing use and to adapt to changing recreational preferences is most directly related to the amount and location of the park land. Thus an adequate standard based on park size, service radius, population served, and acres per thousand population, with built-in flexibility to adapt to varying communities, will be most likely to remain a viable guide.

Many park and recreation authorities minimize the utility of a standard based primarily on the acreage/population ratio, as it does not insure that each park will be of adequate size and properly located.

One of the distinguishing features of the California Committee's recommendation in 1954 was that it emphasized the concept of designing a park to fit a particular neighborhood or community to the point of omitting all mention of a traditional acreage/population ratio as a standard. However, a conscientious application of the Committee's recommendations (i.e., using the middle of its recommended size and served population ranges) for local parks would result in about 15 acres of parks per thousand population.

The National Recreation and Park Association, while patterning its 1970 recommendations somewhat after those of the California Committee, proposed the following population ratios and classifications as an overall framework for its park standard.

A useful standard for San Diego County should:

1. Guide the design of individual facilities to insure that they are of proper size and location.
2. Provide an overall standard to insure equity in the allocation of funds.
3. Allow for community variations.

An overall standard of 30 acres per thousand population is therefore recommended, of which half should be devoted to regional facilities as proposed in 1967 in the County General Plan — 1990, and half — or 15 acres per thousand population for local parks. The local park standard includes a combination of local parks, riding and hiking trails, school playgrounds, and other public facilities which meet part of the need for local recreational facilities.

The actual allocation within the local park standard will vary with the needs and priorities of each community as shown in Table 6.

⁴ The Green Valley area of Poway and much of Fallbrook are good examples of this type of development.

Table 5
NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION
By Classification and Population Ratio

Classification	Acres/1,000 People	Size Range	Population Served	Service Area
Playlots	(Not Applicable)	2,500 sq. ft. to 1 acre	500 – 2,500	Sub-neighborhood
Vest pocket parks	(Not Applicable)	2,500 sq. ft. to 1 acre	500 – 2,500	Sub-neighborhood
Neighborhood parks	2.5	Min. 5 acres up to 20 acres	2,000 – 10,000	¼ – ½ mile
District parks	2.5	20 – 100 acres	10,000 – 50,000	½ – 3 miles
Large urban parks	5.0	100+ acres	One for each 50,000	Within ½ hour driving time
Regional parks	20.0	250+ acres	Serves entire population in smaller communities; should be distributed throughout larger metro areas.	Within 1 hour driving time
Total	30.0			
Special Areas & Facilities	(Not Applicable)	Includes parkways, beaches, plazas, historical sites, flood plains, downtown malls, and small parks, tree lawns, etc. No standard is applicable.		

By Percentage of Area

The National Recreation and Park Association recommends that a minimum of 25% of new towns, planned unit developments, and large subdivisions be devoted to park and recreation lands and open space.

Table 6
STANDARDS FOR PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Classification	Acres/1,000 People	Size Range	Population Served	Service Radius
Playlots and vest pocket parks	0 – 5	2,500 sq. ft. to 5 acres	500 – 2,500	Maximum: 1/8 mile
Neighborhood Parks	1 – 10	Minimum: 5 acres Optimum: Without School: 10 – 30 acres With School: 5 – 25 acres Maximum: No maximum size	2,000 – 5,000	Optimum: 1/4 to 3/8 mile Maximum: 1/2 mile in urban areas 1 mile in rural areas
Community Parks	1 – 10	Minimum: 20 acres (with school) Optimum: 20 – 100 acres Maximum: No maximum size	Minimum: 5,000 Optimum: 10,000 – 25,000 Maximum: 50,000	1/2 to 3 miles or within 20 minutes driving time
Total Local Parks	15			
Regional Parks	15 – 20	200+ acres	Entire County	Within 1 hour driving time
Total	30			
Special Areas and Facilities	(Not Applicable)	Includes parkways, beaches, plazas, historical sites, flood plains, downtown malls, and small parks, tree lawns, etc. No standard is applicable, except that to the extent that a facility or area performs part of the function of a local park, it may be considered a local facility and be counted toward meeting the local park standard.		

DESCRIPTION OF RECOMMENDED CLASSIFICATIONS

Local Parks

In contrast to regional facilities which serve the entire County, local parks are those providing for recreational uses in proximity to the homes of County residents.

Playlot, Vest Pocket Park, Mini-Park These three names all refer to small areas used for open space or recreation. They may be used as play areas for small children, in which case they supplement individual backyards. They may serve senior citizens only, older children, or all age groups, depending on the needs in the neighborhood. They may include play apparatus, paved areas, sand pits, wading pools, or they may simply be planted in grass. Their size usually ranges from 2,500 square feet to 5 acres, although in the past the size and location generally depended more on the availability of vacant parcels of land than on other factors. The effective service radius varies somewhat depending on the type of person served, although it is rarely more than the walking range of a pre-school child or about one-eighth mile. With the increased need and preference for small, close-at-hand parks, these facilities should be encouraged.

Neighborhood Park Neighborhood parks generally serve a population of 2,000 to 5,000 or approximately the same population and area served by an elementary school. In urban areas, neighborhood parks generally do not effectively serve residents living more than one-fourth to three-eighths mile from the park, nor do they adequately serve more than about 5,000 people. They should be planned and located adjacent to elementary schools in order to provide a full range of outdoor and indoor activities for children and family groups. In many areas, the neighborhood park will also serve adults, especially senior citizens. They should provide for three main types of recreation: open areas for passive recreation and relaxation, active sports areas for baseball, basketball, and other court games, and a neighborhood center for neighborhood groups such as Boy Scouts, senior citizen groups, craft classes, etc. A typical neighborhood park may include the following:

- Playlot (preschool children)
- Play area (elementary children)
- Paved multi-purpose courts

- Nature study and quiet areas
- Open, free play areas
- Sports field
- Instructional swimming pool, wading pool
- Family picnic area
- Senior citizens center and outdoor area
- Neighborhood center building
- Off-street parking
- Undesignated open space for buffer areas and expansion

Community Parks Community parks supplement the neighborhood parks by providing for activities that require more space and for specialized functions which must serve a larger population in order to be justified. The community park generally serves the same constituency served by a junior or senior high school — 10,000 to 25,000 population within a radius of 1 to 3 miles. They should be located adjacent to a secondary school in order to promote joint use of buildings and sports facilities. Community parks serve chiefly teenagers and adults. They also serve as the neighborhood park for the immediate environs. A typical community park may include the following:

- Play lot (preschool children)
- Play area (elementary children)
- Paved multi-purpose courts
- Slab for dancing
- Nature area/Outdoor classroom
- Open, free play area
- Sports field
- Swimming pool, wading pool
- Family picnic area
- Senior citizen building and area
- Community center building
- Tennis complex
- Archery Range
- Outdoor theatre/Special Events area
- Golf practice holes
- Off-street parking
- Undesignated and open space for buffer areas and expansion

Regional Parks These parks serve the entire County and usually are at least 200 acres in size. Some are left primarily in their "natural state" while others will have both natural areas and extensive development. They should not, under any circumstances, take the place of neighborhood or community parks. As San Diego expands, there will often be pressure to put facilities in regional parks that are not in keeping with the philosophy or purpose of the park. It is easy to

succumb to this pressure because the parkland is there when the urban areas grow up around it. If local parks are properly located and developed, such pressure will be minimized.

SPECIAL FACILITIES AND AREAS

Parkways and Scenic Corridors

These are essentially elongated parks with a road extending throughout their length. They are usually restricted to non-commercial traffic. The parkway generally serves to connect large units in the park system or to provide a pleasant means of travel within the urban areas and between the urban areas or an outlying region. In some communities, what were once beautiful scenic drives have become major traffic arterials or high-speed thruways, yielding under pressure of

commuter traffic. This should not be condoned, and can often be avoided through proper design and speed restrictions.

The parkway usually follows stream or river alignments, shorelines of large lakes, or natural wooded areas. Thus, its location and size is dependent upon the availability and location of these resources. Where this kind of resource does not exist naturally, it is recommended that a parkway effect or scenic drive be created through proper landscape design and planting. Although no specific acreage standard is applicable, a minimum right-of-way of 300 feet is recommended, with portions being much wider for scenic vistas and other recreation development. The County has embarked upon a scenic highway program and some of these scenic highways will eventually meet this recreational need.

Table 7
SPECIALIZED FACILITIES WITH STANDARDS

Family (Outdoor)	Population Standard	Comment
Baseball Diamonds	1 per 6,000	Regulation 90 feet
Softball Diamonds (and/or youth diamonds)	1 per 3,000	
Tennis Courts	1 per 2,000	Best in group of 4 courts
Basketball Courts	1 per 500	
Swimming Pools — 25 meter	1 per 10,000	Based of 15 square feet of water for ea. 3% of population
Swimming Pools — 50 meter	1 per 20,000	
Skating Rinks (artificial)	1 per 30,000	
Outdoor Theaters (non-commercial)	1 per 20,000	
Shooting Ranges	1 per 50,000	Complete complex including high power, small-bore, trap and skeet, field archery, etc.
Golf Courses (18 hole)	1 per 25,000	

Note: All of the above mentioned facilities are desirable in small communities, even though their population may actually be less than standard. Every effort should be made to light all facilities for night use, thus extending their utility.

Other Special Facilities and Areas

Aquariums
Arboretums
Archery Range
Arenas and coliseums
Beaches
Bike rights-of-way
Botanical gardens
Bowling greens

Campgrounds
Casting pools
Coasting and tobogganing areas
Culture centers
Day Camps
Drag strips
Fishing piers
Football fields
Golf Courses
Handball courts

- Hiking and riding trails
- Horseshoe courts
- Ice curling rinks
- Ice rinks, natural
- Jogging paths
- Lakes and water sports
- Lawn bowling
- Libraries
- Marinas and boating centers (for powered and non-powered boats)
- Miniature golf
- Model airplane areas
- Model boating ponds
- Museums
- Natural areas
- Nature centers
- Nature trails
- Off-road recreation vehicle areas
- Outdoor theatres
- Parkways and scenic drives
- Picnic areas
- Running tracks
- Scenic overlooks
- Shuffleboard courts
- Shooting ranges
- Skating rinks (ice and roller skating)
- Ski centers
- Soccer fields
- Spray pools
- Stables
- Stadiums
- Surfaced play areas
- Teen centers
- Volleyball courts
- Wading pools
- Wildlife preserves
- Zoological parks

THE PLAN MAP

In addition to this text the Local Park Plan includes a map labeled, "Recreation Element San Diego County General Plan." This map indicates the regional and state parks, and local parks. All existing local parks are shown as a part of the Local Park Plan. In addition, the general location is shown for all parks included in adopted city and Community Plans. The Plan map also indicates local park planning areas. These areas represent present or proposed community planning areas and subregional statistical areas. In those areas for which no plans have been adopted indicating locations of future parks, no park site is shown.

The major purpose of the local park plan map is to indicate the acreage that is to be acquired to meet the local park standards established in this Local Park Plan. The acreage indicated represents the number of acres that will be needed to serve the population projected to be living within the park planning boundary areas by 1990.

INVENTORY OF PRESENT FACILITIES

To facilitate planning for local parks, the County has been divided into local park planning areas. These generally consist of present or possible future community planning areas and subregional statistical areas. The following chart shows the present local park acreages and the acreage needed by 1990 to meet the proposed standard.

APPLICATIONS OF STANDARDS

San Diego County is noteworthy for the diversity of life styles offered by its many communities. It is vital to provide parks appropriate to the housing patterns, recreational needs and social requirements of each of these communities. Therefore the Local Park Plan emphasizes the role of citizen participation in the preparation of community plans which will indicate the specific parks that will meet the County standard of 15 acres per 1,000 population. Some communities may desire to emphasize the larger community parks. Others may need a more extensive system of smaller neighborhood parks and mini-parks. It is intended that each community plan and each city plan include goals, policies and priorities and proposed local park locations which will adapt the County standard to that community. The adopted recreational elements of all adopted Plans of all communities and cities are hereby declared to be included as an integral part of this Local Park Plan.

Table 8
County of San Diego
LOCAL PARK PLANNING AREA
PROJECTED PARK ACREAGE NEEDS

Local Park Planning Areas	1990 Projected Population*	1971 Local Park Acreage****	Local Park Requirement of 15 Ac./1,000 Population	Additional Acreage Needed for 1990 Projected Population
1. Central San Diego	162,000	51.5	2,430.0	2,379
2. Peninsula	95,000	124.0	1,425.0	1,301
3. Coronado	35,000	27.6	525.0	497
4. National City	60,000	115.0	900.0	785
5. Southeast San Diego	108,000	142.9	1,620.0	1,477
6. Midcity	128,000	67.5	1,920.0	1,852
7. Kearny Mesa	175,000	189.9	2,625.0	2,435
8. Coastal	113,000	394.8	1,695.0	1,300
9. University	75,000	43.0	1,125.0	1,082
10. Del Mar — Mira Mesa	77,000	0.0	1,155.0	1,155
11. North San Diego	46,000	6.0	690.0	684
12. Poway	45,000*	0.0	675.0	675
13. Miramar	**	**	**	**
14. Elliot — Navajo	115,000	171.9	1,725.0	1,553
15. Sweetwater	20,000	19.8	300.0	280
16. Otay Mesa	50,000	14.6	750.0	735
17. Chula Vista (Castle Park — Otay)	100,000	47.9	1,500.0	1,452
18. South Bay	52,000	92.1	780.0	688
19. Jamul	4,000	0.0	60.0	60
20. Valle de Oro	86,000	19.0	1,290.0	1,271
21. Lemon Grove	35,000	13.2	525.0	512
22. La Mesa	52,000	60.0	780.0	720
23. El Cajon	56,000	34.0	840.0	806
24. Santee	50,000*	98.0	750.0	652
25. Lakeside	30,000	160.0	450.0	290
26. Crest	12,000	3.0	180.0	177
27. Alpine	11,000	0.0	165.0	165
28. Ramona	12,000	8.0	180.0	172
29. Escondido	166,000	83.7	2,490.0	2,406
30. San Marcos	31,000	33.0	465.0	432
31. San Dieguito	75,000*	12.4	1,125.0	1,113
32. Carlsbad	34,000	12.9	510.0	497
33. Oceanside	78,000	79.0	1,170.0	1,091
34. Pendleton	**	**	**	**
35. Fallbrook	36,500*	25.0	547.5	523
36. Bonsall	4,000	0.0	60.0	60
37. Vista	43,000	48.4	645.0	597
38. Valley Center	10,000	3.0	150.0	147
39. Pauma	5,000	0.0	75.0	75
40. Palomar — Julian	7,000	2.9	105.0	102
41. Laguna — Mountain Empire	6,000	179.0	90.0	***
42. Anza — Borrego	7,500	137.0	112.5	***
TOTAL	2,307,000**	2,520.0****	34,605.0	32,198**

* The planned population is used for areas with community plans.

** Miramar and Camp Pendleton excluded in compilations.

*** No acreage deficiency, but due to large area involved, park acreage distribution is insufficient.

**** The local park acreage data includes local parks now serving regional needs, but which would assume the functions of local parks as the regional park system is developed.

NOTE: The projected 1990 population figures for each statistical and subregional area have been redistributed to conform to the local park planning area boundaries. These projected figures will be revised upon receipt of later projections.

Chapter 2

Regional Park Plan

Introduction

For over a generation this nation has witnessed a continuing trend towards greater mechanization and automation in industry and other employment, coupled with the development of hundreds of household mechanical devices. This continuing trend has inevitably resulted in shorter working hours for the average person and the trend seems likely to continue with increasing rapidity into the future. The end result has been a tremendous increase in the amount of leisure time for the average person. Particularly since World War II, it seems to have become universally accepted that it is a public responsibility to provide wholesome, meaningful, recreation activities and facilities to assist in consuming the average person's ever-increasing leisure hours.

This Plan is not intended to portray all of the many recreation facilities that will be required to fill these needs by the year 1990. The full responsibility for providing recreation facilities for the visitors and residents expected by 1990 must be divided among many agencies. Some of the recreation facilities to be provided in this County will be provided by the national government, some by the state government, some by the various city governments, some by County government, some by special recreation districts and, based on present trends, it is evident that many recreation facilities will be provided by private enterprise. This Plan indicates only those parks which need to be provided to serve the entire County. In order to understand the concept behind the regional parks proposed in the Plan, it is necessary to review the recreational services provided by the various types of parks now existing and expected to exist within the County.

Ocean Beaches

Due to the geographical factors involved, beaches must be considered as a separate recreation resource. Quite obviously, inland areas of California depend upon coastal Counties to provide this type of facility. Since the beaches tend to attract considerable intercounty and interstate usage, and since the large and growing visitor industry places high demands on the beach resources, every effort must be made to provide for maximum public utilization of the beach resource. The beaches now in public ownership, except as noted below, are not shown on the County General Plan as regional parks. This is not meant to imply that beaches do not serve a regional function, but rather a recognition that considerable research is required prior to the development of an adequate beach and shoreline plan. Accordingly, it is recommended that the entire shoreline of San Diego County, including the beaches and associated upland areas, be studied as proposed in the long-term comprehensive planning program and that the County General Plan be revised in the future to indicate all of the beaches that should be placed under public ownership and/or control by 1990.

The County General Plan does include Torrey Pines State Park, International Park and Mission Bay Park since these are large parks which have a multiple function of a regional nature, with access to the beach as only one characteristic.

Riding and Hiking Trails

Another important aspect of a total recreational program is provision of adequate riding and hiking trails. The City of San Diego has recently completed a comprehensive study for riding and hiking trails in the San Diego Metropolitan Area.

The research encompassed in this project did not include a comprehensive examination of riding and hiking trail potentials on a County-wide basis. As with beaches, a comprehensive study should be conducted as a part of the continuing planning process and the County General Plan should be supplemented with a riding and hiking element after completion of the necessary research and analysis.

State Parks and Federal Areas

State parks and federal areas provide recreation facilities for residents of the entire state and nation, including County residents. Although a considerable percentage of the day users of the state parks and federal areas in San Diego County currently are County residents, in the future it is expected that population growth in Southern California, coupled with high incomes, more leisure time, and improved access, will result in these facilities becoming primary targets for out-of-county residents. The state parks and federal areas are sufficiently large to meet most of the overnight demands in those months when the weather permits use of the mountains and deserts. However, because of limited day use facilities on the state and federal lands in the eastern portion of the County, driving distances, and climatic limitations, it was determined that even though such lands are vast, they do not and undoubtedly will not, satisfy all of the public's basic cultural and recreational needs. For these reasons such lands are not included as regional parks.

Regional Parks

Regional parks have as their function meeting those recreation needs of the people that are not completely fulfilled by the neighborhood, community, state and national facilities, nor by beaches, riding and hiking trails, and private recreation facilities. These needs are complex and thus the proposed regional parks are either:

- a. Relatively large, in excess of 200 acres, and thus providing the impression of remoteness, spaciousness, diversity of use, and environment, or
- b. If small in size, are of historical, unusual geographic, cultural or recreational interest to a broad spectrum of the population.

The proposed regional parks take advantage, wherever possible, of natural features such as lakes, reservoirs, ravines, cliffs, hills, views,

woods, open lawn, scenic drives and paths, streams, and undisturbed natural areas. The regional parks are proposed to serve all age groups and should include picnic areas, boating and swimming facilities, day camps, bridle paths, and areas for active play. Regional parks may also contain a zoo, botanical garden, museum, band shell, golf course, outdoor theater, or other similar activities and facilities.

The park proposals are based on natural scenic features and available vacant land located within proximity and easy access (one hour maximum driving time) to the population served. Wherever possible the parks are located so as to be served by freeway, major highway, or mass public transportation in order to assure the use of these facilities by persons of all economic groups.

The generally accepted standard for regional park requirements is 15 to 20 acres per 1,000 people. Most jurisdictions include their beach areas, and state and national facilities within this standard. Because San Diego County does have unique characteristics in terms of the location and climatic limitations of its national forests, state parks and beach areas, and because of the County's proximity to the more than 8 million persons living in the Los Angeles — Long Beach — San Bernardino — Riverside metropolitan complex, the decision was made to include only those state facilities that meet the distance criterion described above. This standard, when adapted to population projections and population centers, made possible the allocations as shown on the Plan map.

A minimum site size standard of 200 acres with a minimum of 50 usable acres for active recreation is recommended because of the nature and function of regional parks. A regional park should contain any one or a combination of such attributes as natural beauty, unique topographical features, historical structures, or unusual scenery, and should be capable of being developed for at least two outdoor activities. It is readily apparent that large areas are required in order to meet such requirements, with the exception of those specialized parks described above. It is believed that this standard will provide adequate space for the types of activities desired in regional parks in San Diego County. This standard is intended to be flexible and to provide a general guide for acquiring regional park sites. Such large sites are, of course, economically possible only in areas in which urbanization has not yet affected land values to a large degree.

Regional Park Plan

The County General Plan for San Diego County suggests a regional park system that will meet the diverse recreational needs of the expected population and visitors from other parts of the state and the nation to the year 1990.

Specifically the Plan recommends the regional parks as shown below.

Table 9

EXISTING REGIONAL PARKS & RECREATION AREAS		
Name of Park or Recreation Area	Size (Acres)	Proposed Expansion (Acres)
Agua Caliente (a)	800	—
Balboa (a)	1,158	—
Dos Picos (b)	78	—
El Monte (a)	90	300
Heise (b)	134	—
Lake Jennings (c)	540	—
Lake Murray (b)	410	—
Miramar Reservoir (d)	473	—
Mission Bay (a)	4,604	—
Otay Reservoir (c)	2,174	684
Palomar Mt. State Park (e)	1,886	—
Potrero (b)	110	—
Quail (a)	24	—
San Clemente (b)	389	—
San Dieguito (a)	99	—
Torrey Pines State Park (e)	887	260
Vallecito (a)	71	—
Sycamore Canyon (b)	1,373	—
TOTAL	15,300 Acres	1,244 Acres (f)

- (a) dedicated public park which is developed
 - (b) dedicated public park which is undeveloped
 - (c) County developed recreation area leased from other public or semi-public agency
 - (d) publicly owned reservoir site being heavily used for recreation purposes
 - (e) state park which is heavily used by County residents
 - (f) 1,244 acres need to be purchased
- Combined Total — 15,300 Acres (18 sites)
Proposed Expansion — 1,244 Acres (3 sites)

PROPOSED REGIONAL PARK SITES IN PUBLIC OR SEMIPUBLIC OWNERSHIP (Includes Private Utilities)

Name of Park	Size (Acres)
Calavera Lake	250
Chollas Reservoir	267
Fortuna Mountain	774
Lake Henshaw	4,000
Lake Hodges	1,412
Lake Morena	2,367
Lake Wohlford	2,180
San Pasqual	1,200
Santa Margarita Canyon	1,500
San Vincente Reservoir	3,192
Sweetwater Reservoir	1,476
Dixon Lake	526
TOTAL	19,144

PROPOSED REGIONAL PARK SITES TO BE ACQUIRED FROM PRIVATE OWNERS

(Does NOT include land owned by Private Utilities)

Name of Park	Size (Acres)
Buena Vista Lagoon	450
Guajome	600
Las Penasquitos	435
Agua Hedionda	410
TOTAL	1,895 (4 sites)

PROPOSED REGIONAL PARK SITES TO BE ACQUIRED AND DEVELOPED BY COOPERATION BETWEEN PRIVATE DEVELOPERS AND PUBLIC AGENCIES

Name of Park	Size (Acres)
Batiquitos Lagoon	850
San Elijo Canyon	1,750
TOTAL	2,600 Acres

Amount of land to be acquired by the public has not been determined.

PROPOSED REGIONAL PARK SITE PARTIALLY IN PRIVATE OWNERSHIP, PARTIALLY IN PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

International Park	950
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GRAND TOTALS

Total number of park sites (existing & proposed)	37
Total acreage (includes expansions)	41,133

INTENT AND POLICIES OF THE REGIONAL PARK PLAN

Regional Parks

The Plan indicates proposed regional parks in two categories, those already in public ownership and those without specific boundaries presently in private ownership. It is the intent of the General Plan that the regional parks presently in public ownership be retained as public lands and developed as regional parks.

It is the intent of the General Plan that a specific plan be prepared for each of the regional parks indicated by a symbol. It is further intended that the specific plan for each regional park be adopted including a statement as to the uses of land, the restrictions to be placed on private property in the vicinity and the land to be acquired. Until such specific plans have been adopted, the land is intended to be used based on the designation underlying the symbol shown on the Plan map.

The County-wide General Plan map designates certain areas presently in private ownership for regional parks. It is the intent of the General Plan in this designation to indicate that the highest and best use of this land would be attained if the government were to acquire the land and reserve it as a regional park. It is recognized, however, that there are limited funds available to attain this highest and best use for the land. Accordingly, other uses found to be compatible with the park are declared to be compatible with this designation.

It is the intent of the General Plan that the appropriate governmental agency will be notified prior to the approval of any proposal by a property owner to develop or use any land designated as a park for anything other than a single family dwelling and accessory buildings on an existing lot. It is intended that the governmental agency will be given a reasonable period of time to acquire the property for a public park prior to the approval of any development proposal.

State Parks

The County-wide General Plan map designates certain areas for state parks. It is the intent of the General Plan in this designation to indicate that the highest and best use of this land would be attained if the state government were to acquire the land and reserve it as a part of the state park system. It is recognized, however, that there are limited funds available to attain this highest and best use for the land. Accordingly, other uses found to be compatible with the state park are declared to be compatible with this designation.

It is the intent of the General Plan that the State of California will be notified prior to the approval of any proposal by a property owner to develop or use any land designated as state park for anything other than a single family dwelling and accessory buildings on an existing lot. It is intended that the State of California and other public agencies will be given a reasonable period of time to acquire the property for a public park prior to the approval of any development proposal.

It is further the intent of the General Plan that in the event the public does not acquire the land in a reasonable period of time that compatible private development will be permitted to occur.

It is intended that any proposal for private development will be reviewed to assure that there will be a minimum of adverse affect on the state park.

Recommendations

Parks

The regional park plan should serve as the initial step in the development of a long-range comprehensive County-wide recreation plan which will include all major aspects of outdoor recreation in San Diego County. In addition to regional parks, this plan should include a beach and shoreline element, riding and hiking trail system, open space plan, historical sites plan, and a golf course plan. Supporting studies related to each of these plans should be initiated by the Comprehensive Planning Organization as soon as possible.

As a general principle, acquisition of proposed sites should be given first priority, and development of park sites second priority in implementing the regional park plan. As a rule, sites subject to immediate urbanization should be acquired first.

A 5 to 10 year schedule of priorities for acquiring and developing regional park sites should be established as part of the County capital improvement program.

A continuous program should be initiated by the Comprehensive Planning Organization to update information and obtain factual data relative to recreation habits and needs of San Diego County residents.

Maximum utilization of reservoirs and other waterbodies for recreational purposes should be encouraged by all levels of government.

Historical sites having County-wide significance relative to the early settlement and growth of San Diego County should be acquired by appropriate agencies wherever possible, and maintained as part of the regional park system.

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